1: Gorer J-5 (1937)1938 AK5 Lepcha AK5

people of Mayel would fall asleep and would not send the migratory birds. There is a fairly vague tradition that menstruating women should not approach the flowering plants which bear the fruit that the people of Mayel sell—pumpkins, cucumbers, egg-plants and chillies —or the plants will rot.[3] Opinion about this prohibition was very mixed; some people, especially those who have had much contact with other races, think there may be some truth in the matter, while the more conservative, such as the Mandal, think the statement ridiculous.

The preliminary ceremonies, in those houses where they are held, are small repetitions of the big ceremony after the sowing of all the grains which must be held in each house. It is considered desirable that the same people should officiate in each ceremony, and also that the woman who sings in the spring should take the rôle of Talyeu-mu at the harvesting, and, if possible that the sacrificer should take the rôle of Mayel-mu. If the sacrificer is a woman this of course cannot be done.

The spring offerings consist of the *lafét* sacrifice and *sakyou faat*. The food on the *lafét* is divided into three lines of three heaps each; the centre line is for the people of Mayel, that on the right for all men's patron gods, and especially those of the house-father, that on the left for all women's patron gods, and especially those of the house-mother. The dried bird's flesh in the *lafét* must be a special very small bird which has been killed by a virgin boy; if bigger birds are used or if the boy is not a virgin the gods will be displeased and will not eat and there will be a bad harvest. If the sacrificer is a man there is also offered a *taming* which consists of a long stick to which are attached tiny parcels containing every sort of crop and also tiny *patyoot* of *chi*; this is suspended from the roof above the officiant's head. Before the ceremony begins a song is sung in honour of the people of Mayel and then the Mun offers to them *sakyou faat* and powdered portions of the objects on the *lafét*, calling on the people of Mayel to accept the offerings and throwing them before him or her on to the floor. The cup is constantly re-filled with *chi* with a wooden ladle by a young virgin girl who is sitting beside the Mun. After that everybody except the Mun officiating has to drink some strained *chi* from the buttered cup and eat a part of the offerings and sing songs in honour of the people of Mayel; those people who do not or cannot sing them-

[3] I am told that this is a formal rule among the Nepali, who also consider that these fruit should never be pointed at with the finger.

1: Gorer J-5 (1937)1938 AK5 Lepcha AK5

585 Somebody of the groom's party will convey this information to the Mun in the other room, who will then perform the necessary sacrifices with *chi*, incense, rice, and the chest of an ox.

When this business is dealt with the girl's paternal uncle will say to the representatives of the groom: 'We are giving this girl to the —— *ptso*; if you are not good to her we will take her back and punish you.' The groom's party give elaborate thanks and promise that the bride will be well treated and happy.

585 522 After this there is a considerable hazing of the bride by the two parties, the girl's paternal uncle referring to her in complimentary *tang-bor*, to which the groom's side will retort, if possible making the remarks obscene and derogatory to the bride, who will be sitting with her head hidden in her head-cloth so that it cannot be seen if she is or is not confused. For example, if the girl is older than the groom the girl's uncle may say: 'We are giving you the yolk of this egg which we have peeled for you.' One of the groom's party may reply: 'It is very kind of you, but it seems to us as if this egg has been considerably nibbled at! And we would not be surprised if her pubic hair were not as long as that of Sor *moong*, or in appearance rather like a field of ripe corn!' 'We assure you that the egg has been freshly peeled—just so as to make it easy for you to eat.' 'Well it seems to us the shell has been off a very considerable time!' 'And what does it matter if her pubic hair *is* like a tangled bush? A clever goat can find its way through any bramble. . . .' Pleasantries in this metaphorical vein continue for some time. If the bride is a young girl the *doubles ententes* will be altered to suit the circumstances; thus, if the *tang-bor* about the egg is made an apt reply would be: 'Thank you so much for the new-laid egg; we will eat it very carefully, just a little bit at a time; in that way it will get used to it and like it.'

585 When the teasing of the bride is finished the lamas return; the bride and groom present the Dorjé Lapoon with a plate of rice and then the lamas chant a formal prayer over the couple called *ong-shu-shet*—a prayer for future children.

585 533 535 After this the rest of the day and all the night is given over to feasting and drinking and singing and dancing. Five young women of the groom's family are appointed to carry round the ladles of boiling water to fill the *chi patyoot*, and five older women to refil the *patyoot* with fresh *chi* and give out the food. The songs are mostly improvised, but there are some traditional comic ones; the girl's *bek-bu* almost always sings in a feigned falsetto voice

1: Gorer J-5 (1937)1938 AK5 Lepcha AK5

585 the song beginning, ' Father, help me ! Mother, help me ! ' The
533 dancing is completely unorganised, and merely consists of indi-
535 viduals hopping or stamping more or less rhythmically as they feel disposed. Unlimited food and drink are provided, and it is considered desirable and almost inevitable that everybody should get as drunk as possible. There is a strong sexual overtone to the atmosphere and towards evening many couples separate and go off into the forest for a short spell; they mostly return to the house where the feast is being held before night has completely fallen.

585 At the only marriage feast that I witnessed—that of Ongden with his second wife—I noted ' About seven o'clock the noise was exactly like a very crowded English pub at closing time: the atmosphere was unbelievable. Nearly a hundred very dirty people in two small rooms which had been shut up as much as possible with the balconies closed by wooden partitions and so on; there was a huge fire of wet wood smoking hard so that one could only just see across the room. In the kitchen some people were sleeping round the fire while others were still cooking; at one side there was a very bloody mess where sausages were being made from the entrails by three young men; others were asleep in the muck. In the *dé-ong* the ground was so crowded with sitters and sleepers that there was only just room for the female relations of the husband to circulate with their wooden ladles of boiling water with which they constantly replenished the bowls of *chi*; they appeared to be the only relatively sober people present. The bride and her party sat as if they had never moved, in their long line against the wall of the *dé-ong*; the groom wandered about rather disconsolately, talking very little to anyone. Old Adér, who had previously pulled up his dress and exposed himself during the sacrifice, started singing in a minor key dragging over the syllables; whereupon Lumba's *jethi* (that is his first wife), who is renowned as a singer, got up and asked for some meat to be given her as a fee for the song she was going to sing; she was given some and started singing, but nobody took much notice though everybody said " hush "; the singers walked about as if they were cabaret artists. The pace of the evening got slower and slower and sleepier and sleepier; the children sat about or slept. It would have been very rude for anybody to go home before sunrise the next day.'

585 587 This marriage of Ongden with a widow was slightly irregular and abbreviated, first because it was for both parties a second marriage, and secondly because the bride had been living with her

2: Morris T.-5 (1937)1938 AK5 Lepcha AK5

several long sausage-like pieces of dough, similar to those described for use with the *Go-sum*. They were arranged in the form of a square, inside which were now placed three triangular cups and one round lamp, also made of dough. At each corner of the figure a *Tay* was placed: yellow, in the rear left-hand corner; red in the right; blue in the front right corner; and white in the left. In addition to these were inscribed wooden labels, arrows, and spinning rods, exactly the same as already described. In front of all was a row of small bowls, some containing rice and some water; one of them also had a rose stuck in the centre of it.

The whole offering was now scattered with rice and other grains, and pieces of coloured wool and bits of cotton were laid on it to represent the clothing of the servants. A few roses and other flowers were stuck in here and there; but these had no significance and were merely added to make the whole thing look pretty. Finally, a narrow piece of bamboo, about six inches long, was brought and placed behind the row of cups and in front of the main figure. This was fitted with six wicks, which were later lighted.

Several young Lamas now arrived carrying musical instruments from the monastery, while others were hastily constructing an altar against one end of the wall of stones. It was merely one of the ordinary low Tibetan tables with a cloth over it. In the centre was a large plate of rice decorated with three high cones of butter: to the left was a bowl of *chi;* and to the right a large lump of butter floating in water. In front of the large plate of rice was an exactly similar but smaller one; and in front of this again a large dough *torma*, with six small bowls to its right. These contained, from left to right, water, a wick floating in butter, rice, rice decorated with roses, and two more filled with water.

The altar was placed at right angles to the second Dorje-Lopön, who sat facing the *Gedo*. As soon as everything had been placed in position the altar was sprinkled with water and he, together with Tafoor, started to chant in a droning

2: Morris T-5 (1937)1938 AK5 Lepcha AK5

it was almost the only occasion in Lingtem when I saw anything approaching a display of emotion. But even now it was not marked.

An effort was now made to rouse the more moribund of the spectators, and the Mandal formed them into the semblance of a procession. The stretcher was taken down from the altar and several men started to move off down the path, carrying the thing high on their shoulders. It looked as though the *Deu* would fall, whereupon the Mandal rushed out and removed it. It was then carried separately by a boy who walked in front, the whole procession being preceded by the monastery band. The procession moved a few yards away and then came to a standstill. Chötembu's tipsy wife tottered out from the ranks and started to sing and dance. Palden said that the song was in honour of the gods and implored them to go satisfied away; but the old lady was almost incoherent and distinctly unsteady about the feet. After a while the procession again started forwards, urged on by a man beating a solid disc of brass, which sounded like a station bell.

It was now six o'clock and almost dark. The *Gedo* should by rights have been taken to the top of a hill and there abandoned; but owing to the lateness of the hour a dispensation was obtained and it was taken only as far as the nearest stream. Provided the offering was taken across water at once it could be placed in its final position to-morrow. After it has been finally abandoned the *Gedo* is examined daily for the next three days. Should it be eaten by domestic or other animals in the meantime all is well: otherwise it is a sign that the gods have not accepted the offering and the ceremony is of no avail. The other offerings, those made by the Muns, were abandoned on their altars, and remained in position until destroyed by wind and rain.

About forty people in all attended, a much smaller number than generally gathered for services at the monastery. I was told that this was on account of there being no reading of the sacred books, for which people always make an effort to be

2: Morris T-5 (1937)1938 AK5 Lepcha AK5

243 A small domestic ceremony, such as we witnessed this evening, is performed after any planting of crops; but the most important one is that carried out when all planting for the year is over. This is known as *Sunkyo Fut*, as is the ceremony performed at harvest time, when *chi* and various sorts of grain are offered to the gods, as in our own Harvest Festival. If necessary the three ceremonies may be telescoped into one; in which case the time selected is the rice harvest, since this is, in any case, the most important ceremony.

Most of the people we had seen working in the fields were present in Jiroong's house this evening. The ceremony was performed by a Mun, but this is not essential: the householder can do it just as well. We sat about a bit before anything happened and were given the usual *chi* to drink. Later on, a brass plate was put down in front of the Mun, in the centre of which was a small wooden drinking-cup, decorated as usual with a smear of butter round its rim and containing the special ceremonial mixture of *chi* and various grains. On the old man's left was a bowl of incense, of [314] juniper, I think. The Mun exhorted the gods to give a good harvest, and urged them to cause no damage by rain or hail. Later, he called on the insects and birds and implored them to do no damage. From time to time, in the course of his exhortations, he took a little of the *chi* up in a piece of banana leaf and sprinkled it on the floor. When the ceremony was over this leaf was handed to another old man, who took it and threw it away outside. At the same time Jiroong's wife came and removed the tray, and as she did so she finished off the remains of the ceremonial *chi*. While the ceremony was [781 888 857] still in progress old Pong-ring wanted to go outside. He is old and feeble and nearly blind. A small boy at once got up and, without being told, helped the old man out, and later brought him in again.

243 533 As soon as the Mun had finished the ceremony Jiroong sang what sounded like a hymn, after which his sister gave us another. These songs are always sung on these occasions and are invocations to the gods to look after the crops.

2: Morris T-5 (1937)1938 AK5 Lepcha AK5

CHAPTER 12

Religious Ceremonies

21st March:

DURING most of last night sleep was impossible owing to the musical preparations for to-day's celebrations. A number of Lamas arrived during the evening, and at about nine, just when we had gone to bed, started to make the night horrible with the banging of drums and cymbals and blaring of trumpets. Having been used for the greater part of my life to hearing the bagpipes played in a small closed room I thought I was inured to this sort of thing; but this noise is really too much to be borne with equanimity. Heard at a distance, when it comes reverberating over the hills, this monastic music can sometimes sound extremely beautiful, especially on a cloudy moonlight night: but at close quarters it is a meaningless cacophony, and sounds like a symphony by one of Hindemith's less inspired followers; but to imagine the effect one must think of a powerful wireless turned on at full blast in a very small room, with every door and window closed.

At about eight o'clock this morning people started to arrive, and others continued to turn up throughout the day, until by evening nearly a hundred men, women and children were present. Most of them sat about outside the building, eating and drinking almost continuously, and nobody seemed to take the slightest interest in the service which was going on inside the monastery. The necessary food and drink for these fortnightly gatherings are provided by two households at a time, the turn coming round about once in every ten months. The quantity of food and drink provided on these occasions depends upon the means of the hosts, but Tafoor says the following is an average amount per person:

2: Morris T-5 (1937)1938 AK5 Lepcha AK5

There was a final crash of music at about nine p.m., after which the rest of the night was silence; but I already had such a splitting headache that a little more or less noise would hardly have made any difference. It would be pleasant to get away from these people for a bit; but alas, in four days' time there is to be another festival; this time in honour of Kinchinjunga.

25th March:

Banging of drums and cymbals and trumpet-blowing at intervals throughout the night, but no set piece, so to speak, before 4.30 a.m., when there was a blast of trumpets such as that which we are asked to believe brought down the walls of Jericho. I was half asleep at the time and thought for a moment that an earthquake was imminent.

Soon after dawn more Lamas arrived, and by about eight the usual twenty or so were present. Before the service started a large bundle of wormwood was lighted in the garden, the moment when it took fire being greeted by loud shouts from all present. The purpose of this fire is to keep the clouds away from Kinchinjunga throughout the day, so that the god may observe the ceremonies being carried out in its honour.

All day yesterday Chodu and two companions spent the day constructing a most elaborate *torma* called *Pong Rum*. It was built up on a wooden baseboard about eighteen inches long and contained five separate offerings, the central one, dedicated to *Jung Ngaw*, being rather larger than the others, which were in honour of the following deities, all said to be satellites of *Konchen : Pauhunri* (a mountain forming part of the Cho La range, and known to irreverent mountaineers as Poor Henry. It is very prominent from Lingtem); *Pe matchin Chaw-men; Ditchen Phoop;* and *Hla-ri Ning-phoop*. The intervening spaces between these five main cones were completely filled with small *tormas* of every shape, said to represent attendants, ministers, servants and various minor deities. There were over two hundred of these, each having

2: Morris T-5 (1937)1938 AK5 Lepcha AK5

After this the two feast-givers and their complete households came in and put down several plates of rice and maize in front of the altar: this was an offering to the officiating Lamas, who would later distribute it among themselves. The Dorje-Lopön then got up from his seat and took another large *torma*, which had been made in honour of Guru Rimpoche, down from the altar and pressed it in turn against the foreheads of the two feast-givers. He then took a large dab of butter off the *torma* and smeared a little of it on the head of each member of this party, while they knelt in front of him. This was done with great reverence and there was a distinctly spiritual air about the whole proceeding, the first time I have noticed anything of the sort among these people.

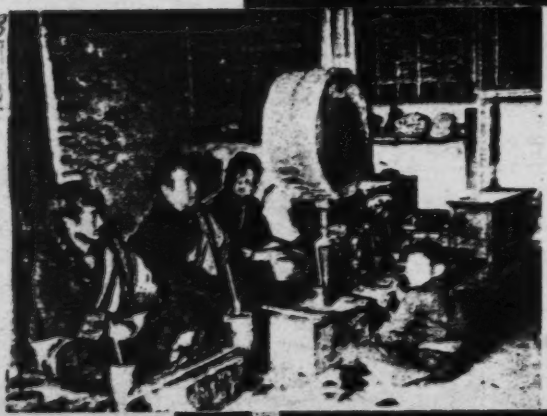
After this blessing of the feast-givers Chodu took a brass *dorje*, or thunderbolt, placed it on top of an upturned china plate and put it on the floor in front of the altar. It remained in that position while he went to the door and cast out a handful of grain of various sorts, after which he handed it back to the Dorje-Lopön. This was followed by another short reading in unison, when the day's proceedings ended abruptly without further ceremony, having been going on continuously for some fourteen hours. Most of the people went home after this, but a few were still sitting about when we went to bed at about nine-thirty. The rest was, unfortunately, not silence, since we were awakened by a sudden burst of music at three a.m. This, however, was only a flash in the pan, so to speak, and for the remainder of the night we were undisturbed.

Throughout the day, while the Kinchinjunga festival had been going on in the main room, the Inebus had been celebrating a service of their own in the small room in which the three large prayer-barrels are housed. It consisted of merely keeping the three barrels turning continuously, while singing in unison the following refrain over and over again:

796
291
[778]

Lamas preparing the *formai* which will later be offered to Kinchinjunga.

533
415
352



Lamas at worship. The duty of the novice is to beat the large drum, in front of which he is sitting. Note the bamboo container of *chi* by the side of each Lama.

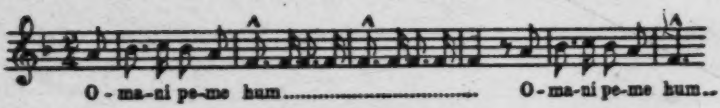
[778
346]

At the conclusion of the service the offering is brought out and exhibited to Kinchinjunga.

[FACING p. 274]

2: Morris T-5 (1937)1938 AK5 Lepcha AK5

796
533



ad lib.; but not less than one hour!

I found it attractive the first time I heard it; but after several hours its constant repetition became somewhat monotonous and I wished that they could at least have changed the order of the notes. One cannot, however, please everybody, and it appears that the gods like this sort of thing; but, in any case, it was the only tune the ladies knew.

535 *Interlude in Gangtok, 21st August, 1937:*
721 In addition to the worship of Kinchinjunga, which takes place once a month in all the Sikkim monasteries, an annual war dance is held in Gangtok in honour of the mountain, and is attended by people from all over the State. I was glad to renew acquaintance with a number of friends from Lingtem, most of whom were, however, rather too drunk to take much interest in the proceedings.

The war dance is peculiar to Sikkim and is not performed in other Buddhist countries. It is carried out in honour of Kinchinjunga, who is called, in brief, *Dzo-nga*, meaning "the five treasures." He is believed to be the god Kuvera, who is otherwise known as rNam-sras-mDung-dMar-chan—(this is the spelling given me by the Maharaja; after many attempts I have come to the conclusion that it is not pronounceable by anyone with a normal European mouth!)—who is represented as being of red colour, armed, and mounted on a white mountain lion; but, in point of fact, I believe that lions are not found in mountain countries and certainly do not exist in the Himalayas. In Sikkim, Kuvera is invoked as the god of war, and as such has to be worshipped periodically. The display of warlike pomp, in which the dance consists, is thought to be pleasing to the god; and is also meant to foster the martial spirit of the people.

In order, however, that the ceremony should not degenerate into a mere display of demon-worship, Maha Kala, the

7: Hooker D-5 (1849-1851) 1854
AK5 Lepcha AK5

Some[1] are supposed to be antidotes against [152]
poison, and hence fetch an enormous price; they are of a 415
peculiar wood, rarer and paler-coloured. I have paid a [435]
guinea for one such, hardly different from the common
sort, which cost but 4*d.* or 6*d.* MM. Huc and Gabet
graphically allude to this circumstance, when wishing to
purchase cups at Lhassa, where their price is higher, as
they are all imported from the Himalaya. The knots from
which they are formed, are produced on the roots of oaks, [B7]
maples, and other mountain forest trees, by a parasitical
plant, known to botanists as *Balanophora*.

Their intoxicating drink, which seems more to excite 273
than to debauch the mind, is partially fermented Murwa
grain (*Eleusine Coracana*). Spirits are rather too strong
to be relished raw, and when a glass of wine is given to
one of a party, he sips it, and hands it round to all the
rest. A long bamboo flute, with four or six burnt holes 534
far below the mouth-hole, is the only musical instrument
I have seen in use among them. When travelling, and the 517
fatigues of the day are over, the Lepchas will sit for hours
chatting, telling stories, singing in a monotonous tone,
or blowing this flute. I have often listened with real 533
pleasure to the simple music of this rude instrument; its
low and sweet tones are singularly Æolian, as are the
airs usually played, which fall by octaves: it seems to
harmonize with the solitude of their primæval forests, and
he must have a dull ear who cannot draw from it the
indication of a contented mind, whether he may relish its
soft musical notes or not. Though always equipped for 224
the chase, I fancy the Lepcha is no great sportsman;
there is little to be pursued in this region, and he is not
driven by necessity to follow what there is.

Their marriages are contracted in childhood, and the 583
wife purchased by money, or by service rendered to the 582

[1] [i.e., wooden cups.—Analyst]

192 denotes the chief objects in nature and their relationships, the trees, plants and animals, and suffices for their easily satisfied physical wants. A characteristic and suggestive word is their name for a 'hunter' which is 'the flesh-meat-pursuing father' (*Maon-riāk bo*) and the word father itself means 'the giver'. There are so few abstract names, that it is almost impossible to express many abstract ideas in their language. Hence the first Lepcha 192 book, the *Tashi sung* or 'Scripture of the Lepcha God *Tashi*', which was composed by a 114 Tibetan Lama and which treated of Lamaistic Buddhism, was forced to borrow words freely from the Tibetan. Indeed the second part of this book-title is pure Tibetan. The large extent to which this borrowing has been carried on in the so-called Lepcha books was not fully realized by Mr. MAINWARING. For I found, on inspecting his manuscript Lepcha-English Dictionary, that fully half of the words which he believed to be Lepcha were in reality Tibetan, either pure primitive Tibetan, or the corrupt Sikhimese dialect of this latter language [1]), and the inclusion of such words tended to mislead in that it made the Lepcha appear somewhat similar in roots and structure to the Tibetan while it is in fact very different.

●533 The very ancient nature of their songs is evident from the fact that they preserve 192 many archaic words and phrases, the meaning of which is now completely forgotten by the Lepchas themselves, who, however, still pride themselves in using them, although they no longer know their sense.

These archaic words and phrases usually occupy the position of adjectives or qualifying phrases, or nouns in opposition, which are prefixed or affixed to a word possessing a well known meaning, so that these archaic words are treated as redundant. They are called by Mr. MAINWARING 'figurative' expressions, and he instances as an example the phrases 'to close the eyes' and 'to be a stiff one' as prefixes to the root 'to die' whilst the affixes are considered by him to be mere 'expletives' and often without 'distinct signification'. To some extent they are perhaps metaphorical, [2]) though generally, I think, they may prove to be descriptive.

101 One of the commonest of these so-called *Tang-bor* expressions is the prefix to the 192 tribal name, namely '*Mo-tan-chi*' *Rong*. If you ask a Lepcha, what is a "Rong", what is the meaning of '*Mo-tan-chi*', he always replies that is has no meaning or sense whatever. To me however it seems, that the first two syllables are clearly the roots for 'Mother' and 'flesh' (*Mo* + *tan*); and *chi* although now ordinarily used for 'spirit' in liquor, may originally have meant animal spirits, 'inspirited or cheerful'. Thus the designation of the tribe would mean 'the (one) Mother-flesh (or consanguineous) jolly Lepchas'; if his hypothesis be correct, and it has much in its favour, the prominence herein given in the tribal designa-

---

[1]) Thus '*Sa-mó-lep*' is given as Lepcha and the equivalent of Tibetan '*p'yag ts'al*, to pray; but both these phrases are Tibetan and neither of them really means to pray — the last being a salutation with the hands, and the former is the vulgar Sikhimese pronunciation of the Tibetan *gsol-ba-teb*, to make a request. Cf. JÄSCHKE's Dict. 270.

Such words will doubtless be omitted by Professor GRÜNWEDEL in editing this unquestionable valuable work of Mr. M. And it is to be hoped that the forthcoming dictionary may be arranged in the order of the European alphabet so as to make it more generally useful as a work of reference; for Lepcha, as we have seen, has practically no character of its own, and certainly to print its vocabulary in the order of the Indian alphabet seems undesirable, as the language is structurally so different from either the Indian or Tibetan.

[2]) The Kafir speech frequently employs metaphorical expressives. MAX MÜLLER's Science of Language 5th ed. II. 275.

776 say the Lepchas, the good spirits never do us any harm; it is only the malignant spirits which we have to fear. To propitiate the most malitious of the evil spirits are priests and [756] priestesses or rather wizards, all of whom are absolutely illiterate — unable to read or write. And their ritual is of the most elementary and loosest kind. They live like the [778] ordinary members of the tribe and have no temples, for the Lepchas have no images nor [777] any visible objects of devotion, though lately some of them occasionally worship in Lama-temples.

756 The priest is called *Bong-ting* or 'Lord-Oracle' literally 'Mouth-Lord'[1]); the mouth-piece of communication between the poor Lepcha and the Great Spirit. But more in demand than the priest is the priestess, the *Mâân* or *Mâân-mak*, who may be the wife of the Bong-ting, though not necessarily so; and both of these offices are usually hereditary. This priestess or priest is resorted to in every case of serious disease, for the Lepcha [753] believes that disease is always one to the machinations of an evil spirit and he has no faith at all in medicines. In the priestly rites there is no dancing as in the Shamanistic Bon of Central Asia. In their worship, which is of fear and not love, they invoke the *Mung* or other evil spirit by cutting a bamboo into pieces and sticking the pieces into the ground with bits of stone Then they propitiate the spirit with sacrifice of a fowl or a pig, and implore it to release its victim. Occasionally they perform sympathetic magic in cases of severe pain by drawing blood with a dry knife or spike of bamboo, without wounding the skin, like the Pawang wizards of the Malay Archipelago[2]). And so highly are these poor aboriginal priests esteemed, even by the immigrant Tibetans in Sikhim, that these latter, although professing the superior Lamaism, frequently condescend to employ these Lepcha priests and priestesses, in the belief that the latter hold especially close relations with the indigenous spirits of the country. It is a question how far this partiality for female priests may be a survival of the matriarchy before referred to, or whether it may be owing to most of the malignant divinities being female and so requiring a female priest.

●533 Coming now to the songs themselves, we see that they are idyllic in character. Their words refer mostly to the inscrutable mystery of the origin and destiny of man and the [824] primitive passion of love. It is curious to notice how they gratefully associate themselves with the Bamboo, whose stout stem supplies them with the sheltering frame-work, walls and thatch of their huts, with fuel, bows and arrows; its larger joints afford water-jugs, cooking pots and pans; its smaller joints supply bottles, smoking pipes and flutes; its branches make a springy couch; its bark supplies baskets, umbrellas and ropes, and its tender shoots are eaten as food. The songs are sung usually to the accompaniment of a [534] flute or a sort of Jew's harp. This small harp is also used by the Nâgas and other Malayan races. It is made of bamboo and decorated by carving or burned in 'poker'-work with a plaited or basket-pattern. It is called *Tung-dyu* — the name *Tung* being apparently onomatopoetic for the twanging sound it produces. The flute called *Po-lit* is also of bamboo as its name denotes and it is decorated like the harp.

The melody of two of the chief of these songs I am able to give here through the

---

[1]) This title is practically identical with the 'Gods' mouth (*His-k'a*) of the Bon religion. Cf. my Buddhism of Tibet p. 482. The term *Yok* or *Yok-mow* is usually applied to the Lamas and Nepalese priests, and may be a corruption of the Indian *Yogi*. An assistant-priest is called *Tyoi-bo*.

[2]) Malay Sketches by F. A. Swettenham, London 1895.

533 kindness of my wife who took it down in European notation. The first of these songs, *A-chu-lé*, shows traces of the very old pentatonic scale, says Sir Sourindro Mohun Tagore, to whom I showed it, and he adds in regard to this scale 'though it is observable in the Scotch ballads, it is the scale (still) in use amongst the Chinese, Japanese and Siamese'.

533 539 In the first song it will be noticed that the first verse has more even measure than any of the others and is evidently the oldest and purest. In the second, the resemblance between the primordial grand mother and Eve is very striking. The third and last verses, with their numerous Tibetan words and references to Buddhist symbolism, are decidedly modern, though many of their words have retained their *Tañ-bor* expressions.

I.

A-chu-lé!

O Joy!

A - chu lé - - - - - - - - kal
tak - bo - Ram wan ya yit-tañ söñ Lyañ Ta-sé ram yä wan yit-tañ
söñ Zor sak-dam ku-tañ-miñ tam a-re ka S'äm-mïn mi son
yit-tó-tsäl ka Gi po-boñ po-mik yit duk-kañ söñ Mo-tan-chi roñ kap ka-yu gam O

A-chu-lé!
Käl [1]) *Tak-bo Ram wan yä yit-tañ söñ*
Lyäñ Ta-se Ram yä wan yit-tañ söñ
Zor sak-dam ku-tañ-miñ täm ä-re-kä

S'äm-mïn-mi son yit tó-täl ka
Gi po-boñ po-mik yit duk kan söñ

Mutanchi Roñ kap ka-yu gam o.

A-chu-lé!
Tar-a'i-a'am Nam-lyañ kañ yit ap
Lañ-bi-loñ yit war-ka-bä uñ yit ap-ó-re
Ñu-yit sob-ó-re ta-lyäñ fo yit wa-o

O Joy!
The *käl* Head-Father-Spirit in the olden time
Made the earth. (He) The Sky-Existing One
Made in this tearful [2]) world the fields to cover the (bosom of the stones.
When the *Shäm-man-mi* men were made
And the *gi* jointed Bamboos and trees, at that same (time were we
The sons of the (one-) Mother-flesh jolly Rongs.

O Joy!
The *far-shi-shäm* mulberry [3]) trees were made,
The rice, the vegetables were made,
The running rivers with the *ap-o-re* fishes were made

[1]) This has been suggested to me as meaning „dark", that is to say „mysterious", and thus implying that it has been borrowed from the Indian *Kâla*; but it seems to me to be a pure Lepcha word.
[2]) Also „rainy" (*sor*).
[3]) „Nambyong" is *Morus serrata*. The fruit also of „Nambong" (*Adina cordifolia*) is eaten.

539

En Ye!
Mo-tan-chi Roń kap ńun non bāu
So-lā-non po-bong yit duk kań sa

Ar-tsum po-mig duk kań sa po-s'or boń
Yit duk kang sa Roń kap gam yoń s'u s'u.

We are the sons of the (one) Mother-flesh jolly Rongs
We were made along with the *so-la-non* bamboos
And the *ar-tsum* Bamboo-joints and the small reed (Bamboos [1])

We the sons of the (one-)Mother-flesh jolly Rongs
Are of equal age (with the Bamboos)!

---

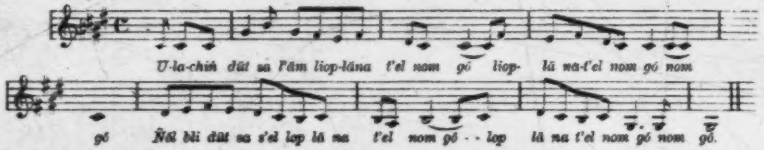
[574] [273] The following three songs are love-laments, the first by a languishing spinster and the others by lovesick swains. The reference in some of them to the "dear sisters" standing behind, relates to the present practice of the girls of the family who stand behind the guests to replenish their bamboo cups of *marwa* millet beer [2]).

III.

U-LA-DUŃ DŪT.

A LOVE LAMENT.

[533]


U-la-chiń dūt sa Fām liop-lāna t'el nom gó liop- lā na-t'el nom gó nom
gó Ńū bli dūt sa s'el lop lā na t'el nom gó - - lop lā na t'el nom gó nom gó.

U-la duń dūt sa-t'ām liop-lā na-t'iel nom gó.	I (am) a maiden [3]), like an unopened bud [4]).
Ńū-bli dūt sa-s'el , , , ,	Like a supple shuttle [5]).
Soń la lpen s'u fak-ruń , , , ,	Like a whirling spindle [6]).
Ka-fer ki-oun nań nāń liop-lā diń mit nom gó.	I stand a maiden, like a twirling spinning thread.
S'or la tań-kat sa-s'el , , , , ,	Like a bright golden tassel.
Mit tań-gum diń-mit nom , , , , , ,	A maiden I stand (forlorn) behind.
S'ung fo s'ot ta-bāl-la liop-lā na-t'iel nom gó.	I (am) a maiden like a tender coiled bud.
Tak-mak fo s'ot nań nāń , , , ,	Like a sorrowing *S'uń* bird.
Sāk la ma run na mo , , , ,	Like a loudly lamenting Takmok bird.
Loń la ma run na mo , , , ,	I feel very sad!

IV.

THE PANGS OF LOVE.

Chin-che-ne tak-nok buk go ma f'ān na-yań	Though I tasted not the wild *chin-che-ne* yam [7])
Kyoń-rūa-le lat duk ā-tim-bu lāt non-nó	I feel great pain in my *kyoń-rūa-le* heart.

---

[824] [231] [415] [222] [1]) *Po-shor* is a small reedy bamboo, grass which is a favorite fodder for cattle. The largest bamboo from which pitchers are made is „*Po*" or „*Poe*" (*Dendrocalamus Hamiltonii*, NEES & ARNOT). It is often 6 to 8 inches in diameter.

[2]) This beer brewed from the fermented seed of millet (*Eleusine crecana*) is served out in bamboo-pitchers or *poā-t'ut*, from which it is sipped up through a thin bamboo tube called *poā-bia*, so called, because it is scraped and polished, from *po*, a bamboo and *bip*, to scrape.

[3]) Literally „Sister".

[4]) The folded bud of a growing shoot, such as the plantain or banana (*Musa sapiens*).

[5]) *Ńū-bli*, a weaving rod.

[6]) *Ian-s'u*.

[7]) *Tak-nok-buk* or „Forest yam". This is a very deeply set wild yam, growing 4 to 6 feet below surface and is only to be dug up with great labour.